LABOUR MONTHLY

Editor : R. Palme Dutt

APRIL 1953

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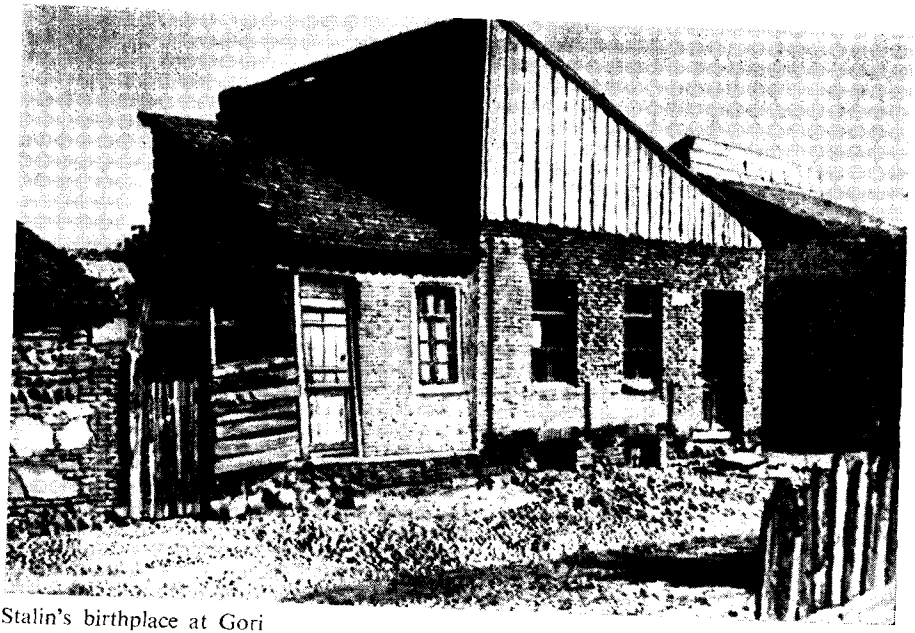

Stalin's birthplace at Gori

Stalin in 1905

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Notes of the Month

Stalin and the Future

'Our task is to transform sorrow into strength.'

MAO TSE TUNG, March 10, 1953.

THE genius and will of Stalin, the architect of the rising world of free humanity, lives on for ever in the imperishable monument of his creation—the soaring triumphs of socialist and communist construction; the invincible array of states and peoples who have thrown off the bonds of the exploiters and are marching forward in the light of the teachings of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin; the advance of the communist movement throughout the world.

For Death, he taketh all away, but these he cannot take.

After nearly six decades of tireless theoretical and practical activity and political leadership, rising from height to height of achievement and from triumph to triumph, the greatest disciple and

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successor of Marx and Lenin completed his lifework on March 5, 1953. He was working and giving leadership to the very last hour when the fatal stroke bore down upon him on March 1. He died within nine days of the seventieth anniversary of the death of Karl Marx. And what a lifework in those years from the world of 1895 to the world of 1953—from the darkness of Tsarism to the glory of Soviet emancipation and the transition to communism. Through all the storms of a thunderous dawn, of the dissolution of an old era and the birth of a new, he steered the ship of human hopes and aspirations with unflinching tenacity, courage, judgment and confidence. Now the road lies plain ahead. Departing, he could say with Bunyan:

> *My sword I give to him that shall succeed me in my pilgrimage, and my courage and skill to him that can get it. My marks and scars I carry with me to be a witness for me.*

Light and Darkness

There are moments in history when an instant sums up an age. Such a moment was when the news of the death of Stalin struck a chill in the hearts of the overwhelming majority of human beings throughout the entire world. The days of grief that followed revealed that the whole world—with the exception of a tiny handful of evil maniacs—mourned the loss of Stalin. Not merely in the socialist world, but from France to India the flags were lowered. That patient file of mourners, ten miles long, and sixteen deep, hour after hour in the icy cold of Moscow's streets, to pay their last tribute before the bier of Stalin, spoke the great heart of the Soviet people more profoundly and more eloquently than a million ballot boxes. History knows no parallel to this. When Lenin died, millions and millions mourned him in every country of the world, with a universality that had never before been known for any man in the moment of his death. Hitherto the recognition of greatness across the barriers of countries and continents, of nations and language, of race and colour, has had to await the verdict of generations and of centuries. Communism has changed this. Already through Communism the human race begins to become one kin. Nearly thirty years have passed since the death of Lenin. If millions and scores of millions in every country of the world mourned the death of Lenin, hundreds and hundreds of millions have mourned the death of Stalin. Not merely the thousand million human beings either already in the countries of the camp of socialism or consciously

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supporting its aims. Also the further hundreds and hundreds of millions, not yet politically awakened, but recognising in the name of Stalin the symbol of the champion of the oppressed and the exploited over the whole earth, the main target of the hatred of the imperialist oppressors and exploiters, the tireless fighter for peace, the shield and bulwark protecting humanity from the horrors of a third world war. Only the tiny handful of fomenters of war, the parasites and their hirelings, reviled him. Like a penetrating searchlight, the loss of Stalin laid bare the contours of the modern world; the light and the darkness; the masses of the common people, and the ravening enemies of humanity; the friends and the enemies of progress; who is for peace and who is for war.

Hyena Howls

In contrast to the feelings of the common people, the hacks and hirelings of the subsidised sheets of the millionaires—fearful of this universal grief and its meaning, guiltily conscious of the contrast between the mighty constructive achievement of Stalin's leadership and the abject bankruptcy and worsening conditions associated with their own chosen leaders, and panic-stricken at the rising wave of the demand for peace—set to work to try to turn the current and poured out day after day on a scale never before equalled, with a depth of infamy beating their own lowest records, a turbid torrent of filth and lies, compounded in equal parts of barbaric ignorance and malice, which only served to reveal their own degradation and will remain on the record as a measure of their 'civilisation'. The jackals and wild asses sought to dance on the grave of the dead lion. While the body lay scarce cold upon the bier, the servants of the millionaires proclaimed in screaming headlines across the page their witches' feast of rejoicing over the death of the leader of the people. The pigmies of Transport House, conscious of their own abject failure to achieve socialism or bring any result save worsening standards, chronic crisis, colonial wars and the heaviest militarisation of any country in the world, in the service of the expanding profits of the great monopolies and American overlords, assiduously scribbled to 'debunk' the 'myth' of Stalin and expose his 'colossal blunders'. Would that we could enjoy a few such 'blunders' here, which have cleared out forever the capitalists and landlords, raised twelvefold the standards of living of the people, smashed fascism and built a mighty fraternal alliance of states of the working people which alone do not bow the head to the American Moguls.

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High-Principled Gentlemen

Most revealing of all, perhaps, was not so much the screaming and reviling of the sensation-mongering press, as the casual remark of the editorial of the most 'respectable' Conservative *Daily Telegraph* on March 7—within one day of the news of the death:

> If anything could convince the Russian people of the sincerity of our will for peace, it ought to be the fact that, at this delicate moment for their rulers, we are not going to swoop down upon them like a vulture from the skies.

A remarkable demonstration of the 'will for peace'. Perhaps an even more remarkable demonstration of the present frame of mind of our official rulers who can actually boast in public of such a singular piece of self-denial. 'You see what high-principled gentlemen we are. When our neighbour bows his head in grief, we do not immediately plunge a knife in his back. Are we not wonderful models of virtue?' The ethics of the American gangster have indeed travelled fast to become the tacit assumption of the reasoning of the Foreign Office. The scribe has given away more than he intended. The illumination which was intended to fall on the virtue of resistance to such a temptation falls much more powerfully on the peculiar nature of the temptation which has been resisted. And perhaps even the temptation was resisted, not so much because of superior virtue, as because of the very sure knowledge that the strength and vigilance of the Soviet people is not for one moment diminished even in the hour of grief and bereavement.

The Fight for Peace Goes Forward

Let the gentlemen of the *Daily Telegraph* and the Foreign Office, of the State Department and the Central Intelligence Agency, who calculate so glibly on the 'crisis' to follow the death of Stalin, and think the moment opportune to redouble the sending of their bombers and their agents into the territories of the people's democracies, take due note. The deep grief which has assailed the Soviet people, the working people of all countries, and all progressive mankind, over the loss of Joseph Stalin, and now also of Klement Gottwald, will never for one moment weaken, but will on the contrary strengthen and steel the determination of all to go forward for the great aims to which Stalin devoted his entire life and showed the way forward for all—the aims of peace and international co-operation, of political, social and economic freedom, of communism. The calm strength and unity of the Soviet people in their hour of bereavement, as they have closed their ranks around

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their Communist Party and Soviet Government, under the leadership of Georgi Malenkov, has set the example for all in this time of testing. Above all, the fight for peace unites, and must unite, the widest range of the most diverse political outlooks, states and peoples. There are new dangers. There are new opportunities. The need for a meeting of the Heads of States is greater and not less. Life goes forward. The fight for peace goes forward.

Into Action

In this number we print tributes to the memory of Joseph Stalin from the Chairman of the Communist Party, from the Chairman of the Society for Cultural Relations with the U.S.S.R. and from the Prime Minister of the Indian Government. We print also a review of the first volume of the Collected Works of Stalin in English, which will bring new wealth of Marxist understanding to the British labour movement, together with the famous survey by Stalin of the lessons of the British General Strike twenty-seven years ago, which reads today as freshly as when it was first delivered and brings also lasting lessons for the labour movement of this country. The commemoration of Stalin, the profund study of his teachings and example, and the absorption of the rich treasury of the inheritance he has left us—all this is now and will continue the indispensable weapon for further advance. The teachings and example of Stalin live on in the present. They live on by and through the use we make of them in action. The truest commemoration and honour to Stalin can only be finally expressed, not in words, but in deeds. Stalin taught us above all the meaning of 'living Marxism', as he called it, which is never content to rest on the study and interpretation of the past, but tirelessly and alertly advances to meet new problems and new conditions and find the path forward. With strengthened understanding, with deepened recognition of our responsibilities, we must go forward to tackle the problems of the present situation in the light of Stalin's teaching. The enemy does not wait. The hour calls for renewed vigilance, for action.

On Guard

During these hours of loss and of commemoration the international situation has not stood still. On the contrary, crowded events have demonstrated alike the new and intensified dangers of extended war and sudden reckless strokes of aggression, and at the same time the strengthened basis in popular support, and in the

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universal alarm over the reckless threats of the aggressive war camp, to carry forward to a new stage the fight for peace. In the frenzied language of a Dulles the 'Stalin era' is now succeeded by what he is pleased to call the 'Eisenhower era' in the same grandiloquent tones with which Hitler used to speak of his 'Third Reich' 'to last for a thousand years'—it lasted for twelve. The aggressive plans of the Eisenhower-Dulles strategy are pressed forward in the Far East. The visit of Eden and Butler to Washington has revealed a new depth of surrender on the part of Britain's rulers. On the other hand, the opposition is rising in Britain and in Western Europe, no less than in Asia, to the aggressive war plans. Despite all the 'big stick' thumping of Dulles during his European tour, and his ultimatum for ratification of the Bonn and Paris agreements for West German rearmament by April 1, the Rome compromise of France and the Bonn Government was scarcely announced before its precarious fragility was demonstrated. The economic situation is deteriorating in Western Europe, and above all in Britain. The demand extends for a reversal of the present disastrous course, for a lightening of the burden of rearmament and of trade bans, and for a renewed initiative for negotiation and peace. Such is the nature of the present situation, pregnant with possibilities for war and for peace. The repeated incidents during these recent days of Western military planes violating the frontiers of the socialist world and being brought down are a sympton of the critical character of the present situation. The war-mad lunatics are at large, but the strength of the peace camp continues to grow. The heart of this fight is now here in Britain.

A New Capitulation

What fruits did Eden and Butler bring back from their pilgrimage to their Mecca of Washington? 'Meagre' was the best euphemism that the Press could find to describe the outcome. 'A somewhat meagre result', was the judgement of the *Observer* diplomatic correspondent. 'Meagre', said the *Daily Herald* editorial. *The Times* spoke of 'disappointment at the absence of positive results'. But indeed there were very 'positive results'—from the standpoint of the American aggressors. Britain accepted to impose a self-blockade on trade with China, thus dealing a blow at Hong Kong, at British shipping and at Britain's export markets. In return, Eden gratefully pocketed two venerable eggs as new 'concessions'. First, that the United States would support the new proposals to Iran,

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which had already been presented as *joint* U.S.-British proposals on February 21, before Eden left, so that this 'concession' was a dummy; while in the meantime the 'Miriella' and other tankers under the control of companies ultimately reflecting American financial interests merrily drew the nationalised oil from Iran and cocked a snook at British protests about 'stolen oil'. The second 'concession' was even more sensational: to recapitulate the promise made to Churchill a year ago about 'consultation' in the use of the bomber bases in Britain. With these two dummies in his pocket to display to an admiring Churchill, Eden happily sailed home to strike the promised blow at Britain's trade with faithful promptitude by the new Board of Trade Order, published on March 16 and coming into force on March 31. Japan's trade with China (with American finance heavily behind the Japanese industrialist) is allowed to soar in the name of 'economic necessity'. Ceylon goes stoutly forward with the mutually beneficial rubber-rice trade agreement; and the American Press regretfully admits that there is really no alternative, since otherwise Ceylon would starve. The blow falls, not so much on China, as on Britain. The 'cold war' on Britain is intensified by the Eisenhower-Dulles Administration of the American Multi-Millionaires with the obliging aid of Mr. Eden and Mr. Butler.

Convertibility?

The economic-financial negotiations have been shrouded in a veil of reticence, in which the verbose and vague communiqué makes one significant reference to the necessity for Britain to pursue 'sound internal policies'. But it appears likely that the outcome will prove no less menacing for Britain. The Dominions Premiers' Conference plan, which Butler brought with him for humble submission to his American masters, is reported to have been a plan for a partial or limited convertibility of sterling, subject to American concessions in the field of tariffs and investment and the provision of new dollar credits to sustain sterling after the removal of a fixed exchange. Such a plan was clearly designed to counter the American demand for full convertibility, that is, for the destruction of the sterling bloc, by a substitute which would appease the Dominions' demand for more dollar releases, and at the same time correspond to the strategy of powerful interests in the City which were demanding partial convertibility and consequent devaluation as a means to attack standards in Britain and lower costs, and thereby carry forward the fight of sterling against the dollar. It is evident that this plan was 'reported' to the authorities

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in the United States. There is no evidence that it was approved, or that agreement was reached in this long-drawn battle of sterling and the dollar.

'Dependable Ally'?

Significance attached to the report on Britain's crisis released by the semi-official U.S. Committee for Economic Development (described as 'an important private group of American business men and economists' with 'close links with the Republican Administration') at the moment of the arrival of Butler and Eden. This report, according to the Press (*Observer*, March 1), made 'a candid analysis of British economic weaknesses', and pointed out that

> these weaknesses are not, as was thought until recently on both sides of the Atlantic, merely the effect of the economic dislocation of the post-war years, but are deep-seated and will not disappear automatically with the passage of time.

Hence the fear that Britain might try to escape from the American net. The Report picked out (*Manchester Guardian*, March 2)

> a growing tendency in Britain to minimise the seriousness of the Soviet threat and the need for rearmament. . . . Under the pressure of economic difficulties British morale could waver and Britain could drift towards neutralism.

From this gloomy analysis the conclusion was drawn that

> the United States must go on helping Britain indefinitely if Britain is to survive as a dependable American ally.

In other words, hand out an occasonal retainer to the faithful vassal to keep him docile—together with a few lectures on how to economise and cut down his disgraceful social services. It is possible, however, that the British people may desire to 'survive' for other purposes than to be 'a dependable American ally', especially when the 'dependable American ally' becomes the 'expendable American base', whose chances of 'survival' could be highly dubious.

Economic Warning Signals

Indeed, while the American patron sanctimonously lectures Britain for economic unsoundness, chronic crisis and impending bankruptcy, it is not so certain that the economic health of the patron is quite so blooming as professed. It is impossible to ignore the economic warning signals which are accumulating in the capitalist world, including in the United States, and which may profoundly affect the issues of war and peace. The short-term stimulus of

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rearmament and the reckless expenditure on the aggressive war in Korea is giving place to the longer term disorganising effects of the rearmament and war policy, not only in the vassal countries of the United States, but also in the United States. The following table is instructive:

U.S. MILITARY EXPENDITURE AND GROSS NATIONAL PRODUCT
(Annual increase in billions of dollars)

	1948	1949	1950	1951	1952
Military Expenditure	+3.4	+3.5	-1.5	+17.6	+11.5
Gross National Product	+9.2	+1.1	+22.4	+26.1	+8.0

(*The Banker*, March,1953.)

Thus the productive increase had begun to sag in 1949, and was given a big upward spurt through the Korean War in 1950 and 1951. But by 1952 the rise in production had fallen behind the rise in arms expenditure.

Contradictions of Rearmament Economy

Rapid expansion of productive power has been accompanied by falling consumption levels of the population. Mounting agricultural surpluses demonstrate the developing farm crisis; farm prices have fallen 15 per cent. during the past 23 months, while food consumption per head is seven per cent. below the level of 1946 (*National Guardian*, February 26, 1953). Previously Marshall Plan expenditure provided a market for agricultural surpluses; now 'economic aid' has given place to 'military aid', which economically weakens the countries receiving it even more than the previous 'economic aid'. Thus the conditions develop, as with the previous Hitler economy, in which the rising contradictions consequent on the rearmament and war policy can only either lead to still more reckless rearmament and new aggression—the demand of the Republican majority—or else compel a basic reversal of existing policies. This is the situation underlying the crisis of foreign policy of the Eisenhower Administration and the whole Atlantic Alliance which is now developing. The alternatives of war or peace—new aggression or the path of negotiation—grow increasingly sharp.

Western Europe and Britain

If the economic danger signals are visible in the United States, they are clamorous in Western Europe, and above all in Britain. The *Economic Survey of Europe Since the War*, published by the

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secretariat of the United Nations European Economic Commission, has had to admit the staggering contrast between the economic decline or stagnation of the countries of 'Western Europe' (including Jugoslavia and Greece! i.e., more correctly, the capitalist countries of Europe in the American orbit) and the soaring advance of 'Eastern Europe', i.e. the countries of socialism and people's democracy independent of the United States. The economy of 'Western Europe', the Report records, 'has stagnated for the past eighteen months', while 'the Eastern European Governments have on the whole planned successfully', and industrial development in the Soviet Union has 'continued at a rate surpassing that in any Western European country' and 'is increasing at a much faster rate than can be expected for Western Europe' (*The Times* summary, March 6). After all the paeans about 'American aid', the Survey now gloomily admits that American dollar aid 'has done very little to relieve, and may indeed have aggravated' Britain's dollar problem (who was right and who was wrong in 1947?). United Nations statistics have indicated that the industrial output of Western Europe in 1952 has shown no advance on 1951, and that of Britain has declined by three per cent., while that of the Soviet Union increased by 11 per cent., of Bulgaria by 18 per cent., of Poland by 20 per cent., and of Hungary by 24 per cent. Every public statement of Mr. Butler in the United States was a melancholy lament that Britain is spending two-fifths of its budget and using one in eleven of its population for military purposes, at the expense of productive, trading and export needs. Yet the policy which leads to these disastrous results is still blindly pursued.

Towards the Revolt of the Vassals

It is not surprising that in these conditions voices should begin to sound increasingly, both in France and in Britain for a change of course: against the reckless aggressive plans of the United States' rulers in the Far East; for a reduction of the burden of armaments; and for negotiations with the Soviet Union and with the Chinese Government. All the hectoring and bludgeoning of Dulles on his European tour has not been able to check the rising anger and resistance to Nazi rearmament. In significant recent editorials on February 6 and 8, the French newspaper *Monde* declared:

> We shall be unable to follow the United States into a possible general war with China. We shall refuse to let the United States forge an ever-growing number of German divisions in Europe. . .

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America would do well to reflect twice. . . . For the peoples of Europe cannot accept such a policy. A third world war . . . would bring the final annihilation of Europe. This is known to all Europeans who will never accept a general war unless there is Russian aggression. No propaganda, no threats can modify this.

Within one week the reply came from the American semi-official organ, the *New York Times*. On February 15, its diplomatic correspondent, James Reston (the same whose questions received the final statement of Stalin for peace), announced grimly that General Eisenhower, while he may 'consult' the Atlantic vassals before any 'important' moves, *'will not wait their approval'*. He went on:

This is no mere war of nerves. Not only are all sorts of military and naval schemes under consideration, but certain specific moves, including at least one new military move, have been planned and approved. Beyond that one cannot go.

The choice of the path of war or of peace is growing very sharp.

Stalin and the Fight for Peace

The wise and tireless leadership of Stalin for peace during these post-war years has been carried forward by Malenkov with his historic declaration of March 15:

At the present time there is no such controversial or unsolved question which could not be settled by peaceful means on the basis of the mutual agreement of the countries concerned. This concerns our relations with all States including in that our relations with the U.S.A. The States interested in the maintenance of peace can be assured at present as well as in the future of a lasting peaceful policy of the Soviet Union.

There speaks the legacy of Stalin to us all today. During all these critical post-war years, in the face of all the provocations and bellicose utterances from powerful circles in the West, in the face of all the frenzied rearmament, encircling offensive bases and local wars of aggression, the calm voice of Stalin never ceased to proclaim that war between the countries of socialism and the countries of capitalism is not inevitable, that the common people of all countries can prevent it, that war could only become inevitable if the peoples let themselves become entangled in the web of lies of the warmakers. To the very last, in that final public utterance of his answers to the *New York Times* in December, 1952, and in his interview with the Indian Ambassador in the beginning of this year, the voice of Stalin never ceased to call for peace, for the cessation of the present wars in progress, for the reduction of armaments, for the negotiation of the leading Powers on whom rests the final

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responsibility of war or peace, for international co-operation. Let that voice be heeded before it is too late. The co-operation of the British and Soviet peoples for peace could ensure the victory of peace. Such a victory for peace could ensure a new and happier future for Britain and the world. In those last months of ceaseless and redoubled theoretical and practical activity before his death Stalin marked out with sure hand and unshakable confidence and optimism the path to the future. May the teachings, the example and the inspiration of Stalin guide us all in our efforts henceforth to reach to what he proclaimed in that final speech to the Nineteenth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union as the 'radiant future for the peoples'.

March 18, 1953. R.P.D.

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To China (except Hongkong), Australia, New Zealand, Japan and the Philippines, post free: Single copy 5s.; a year's subscription 60s. To Aden, Algeria, Egypt, Iran, Iraq and Syria, post free, 4s. per copy; a year's subscription 48s.

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TRIBUTES TO STALIN

I. JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

WHEN we think of Marshal Stalin, a panorama of the history of the last 35 years passes before our eyes. All of us here are the children of this age and have been affected by it in many ways. We have grown up not only participating in our own struggles in this country but, in another way, with the mighty struggles that have taken place in this world, and we have been affected by them. And so, looking back at these 35 years or so, many figures stand out; but perhaps no single figure has moulded and affected and influenced the history of these years more than Marshal Stalin. He became gradually almost a legendary figure, sometimes a man of mystery, at other times a person who had a rather intimate bond not for a few but with a vast number of persons.

He proved himself great in peace and in war. He showed an indomitable will and courage which few possess. Perhaps when history comes to be written about him, many things will be said and we do not know what varying opinions may be recorded in subsequent generations. But everyone will agree that here was a man of giant stature, a man who, such as few do, moulded the destinies of his age and although he succeeded greatly in war, a man who ultimately will be remembered by the way he built up his great country.

Again, people may agree or disagree with many things that he did or said. But the fact remains that he built up that great country, which was a tremendous achievement. In addition to that, and this was a remarkable fact which can be said about very, very few persons—he was not only famous in this generation but he was in a sense intimately concerned, if I may say so, with vast numbers of human beings. At any rate, vast numbers thought of him in an intimate way, in a friendly way, in an almost family way, certainly in the Soviet Union, and by many others too outside.

I have known people who were associated with Marshal Stalin or the work that Marshal Stalin did and who subsequently disagreed with him. They told me that while they disagreed with him, they felt a personal wrench because of the personal bond that had arisen between them and him, even though they had not come near him or had merely seen him from a distance.

This tribute was delivered by Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru in moving the adjournment of Parliament in India as a mark of respect on March 6. The State Assemblies in India also stopped their debates to pay tribute. The reprint is by courtesy of the *India News*.

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· So here was this man who created in his lifetime this bond of affection and admiration among vast numbers of human beings, a man who has gone through this troubled period of history. He made mistakes in the opinion of some or he succeeded—that is immaterial—but everyone must necessarily agree about his giant stature and about his mighty achievements.

So it is right that we should pay our tribute to him on this occasion, because the occasion is not merely the passing away of a great figure but, perhaps in a sense, the ending of an era in history.

Of course, history is continuing, and it is rather absurd, perhaps, to divide it up into periods as historians and others seek to do. History goes on and on. Nevertheless, there are periods which seem to end and take a fresh lease of life and, undoubtedly, when a very great man passes away who had embodied his age to a great extent in a certain measure there is an end of that particular period.

I do not know what the future will hold. But, undoubtedly, even though Marshal Stalin has passed away, because of the great hold he had on their minds and hearts, his influence and memory will continue to exercise people's minds and inspire them. He has been described by many persons, including some who have been his great opponents on the world stage, and those descriptions vary and sometimes are contradictory. Some of them describe him as a frank and even gentle person. Others describe him as hard and ruthless. Maybe he had all these features in him. Anyhow, a very great figure has passed away.

He was not technically head of the Soviet State, but Marshal Stalin was something much more than the head of a state. He was great in his own right, whether he occupied office or not, and I believe that his influence was exercised generally in favour of peace. When war came he proved himself a very great warrior. But from all the information that we have had, his influence has been in favour of peace even in these present days of trouble and conflict.

I earnestly hope that his passing away will not mean that that influence which was exercised in favour of peace is no longer to be available. Perhaps I may express the hope that this event may loosen all our minds a little from their rigidity in all countries, and that we may view the present problems of the world not in that rigid way which develops when people are continually in conflict and argument with each other but in a somewhat more responsive and understanding way, so that his death may serve to bring us more to think of this troubled world and to endeavour even more

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than before to secure peace in this world and to prevent any further disaster and catastrophes from happening.

[*Mr. Nehru disclosed that when news of Marshal Stalin's serious illness came, he was reading a long report from the Indian Ambassador in Moscow about the recent interview; at which Stalin expressed his desire that world peace might not be broken.*]

He expressed then, also, his goodwill for India and sent his good wishes to our country and to some of us. And it was interesting how he discussed with our Ambassador some of our cultural problems, showing a certain knowledge which was slightly surprising. He discussed—it may interest the House—the languages of India, their relationships, their parentage and their extent, and our Ambassador gave him such replies as he could on the subject.

So, while paying our tribute on this occasion, we may also hope that the world may be excited by this event into thinking more in terms of peace.

II. D. N. PRITT, Q.C.

FOR sixty years of his life this great man who died last month, Joseph Vissarionovitch Stalin, gave loyal, energetic service and leadership to the people of Russia, and to oppressed and exploited people throughout the world. Always he fought for their immediate interests, at the same time as he led them forward towards the goal of Socialism and peace. For nearly half that time, he was the leader of the first, the principal, Socialist country.

Constantly renewing himself—on the analogy of Antaeus—by direct contact with the masses for and with whom he worked, he achieved so much, and the masses themselves under his guidance achieved so much, that it is difficult to choose for our praise the most noteworthy developments of the Stalin era. Let me, without cataloguing, mention a few of them.

Under Stalin, the new Socialist world, whose foundations had been laid under Lenin, has been built up until it already enriches two-fifths of the world, and is likely to enrich much more in the near future.

Under Stalin, the Fascist menace was seen and understood earlier and more fully than in the capitalist countries, whose rulers inevitably sympathised with so much of Fascism. And when Fascism finally burst into war, the Soviet peoples and generals, and above all Stalin himself, displayed courage, tenacity, endurance, self-sacrifice, incredible industrial efficiency, and unsurpassed strategic skill, which enabled them to make the greatest and most crucial

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contribution, in retreat and in advance, to victory over Fascism.

Under Stalin, too, the U.S.S.R. and its Socialist neighbours now carry on the fight against renascent Fascism and the threat of the third world war.

Perhaps indeed, the greatest of all contributions of Stalin and his people is the struggle to maintain peace in the face of the moribund capitalism which still, with palsied hands, rules a large part of the world. War is the natural outcome of the corruption of that dying force; but the strength and wisdom of Stalin and his people and neighbours are such that—with unremitting vigilance and shrewd judgement—the third world war will yet be averted.

But many other things enrich and illuminate the era of Stalin, which will be prolonged by the Soviet people under his inspiration.

Under his guidance, science has been so developed that man looks forward to a future of great prosperity and happiness; culture and education have been so spread through and among the masses that the outlook, the interests, the understanding, the way of life, of the masses have been raised far beyond the highest levels which are achieved in the old world only by a very small section of the most favoured classes.

Under Stalin, too, the many long-established horrors of capitalist life—the exploitation of man by man, the inferior status of women, the oppression of vast groups of mankind on the basis of race or colour, the misery and waste of unemployment and of unnecessary grinding poverty side by side with great individual wealth—all these have passed from the Socialist world, indeed from the very memory of over half the population.

When we look back at the ordeals through which the Socialist world has passed since 1917 or 1924, and imagine what sort of a world we would now have if Socialism, under Lenin and Stalin, had not triumphantly surmounted those ordeals, we can indeed be thankful of the Stalinist developments of our history; and we can take both the ignorant speculations of our least disreputable newspapers and the muck-rakers of our 'popular' press as a measure of the futility, despair, and defeatism of those sections of the world's rulers who still oppose Socialism. Confident as we contemplate his work, we can say 'Farewell, Comrade Stalin, we thank you for all you have done, and all you have led the masses to do, to make a richer, more beautiful, more peaceful world'.

We can say, too, to Malenkov and to the Soviet peoples: 'All our hopes and wishes are with you. Go on and prosper. Build on Stalin's great structure an ever finer and more secure—and a wider

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—Socialist world. With his inspiration, you cannot fail. With his and your inspiration, we shall all be with you'.

III. W. GALLACHER

THE people of the Soviet Union, the progressive forces and the Peace Movement throughout the world have suffered an irreparable loss through the death of our great and well-beloved Comrade Joseph Stalin.

In the first decade of this century we read often in the columns of *Justice* and in our monthly magazines of the activities of the Russian Social Democrats, particularly so during the 1905 revolution and the London Congress in 1907. But although considerable interest was aroused by these events and by the intense participation of the Russian representatives in international congresses, it must be admitted that the names of the leaders of the Russian revolutionaries didn't register in our minds, not mine, at any rate. It wasn't till 1917 that the name of Lenin shone out like a bright red star in the working-class firmament. The great genius of Marxian strategy had by then fashioned the powerful working-class weapon, a party of a new kind, that was to lay the bourgeois low.

In 1920 I was in Moscow attending the Second Congress of the Communist International. There I formed a warm friendship with Comrade Sergieff Artyom, a miners' leader who had been abroad and who spoke good English. He was a member of the Political Bureau of the Bolshevik Party and from this comrade I first heard the name of Stalin. He never tired of talking about this great comrade. Always, he told me, when some weighty problem was before them, 'all eyes turned to Comrade Stalin'. Stalin, he said, was the man beyond all others that Lenin and the Political Bureau depended upon. I didn't see Stalin during that visit. He was at the front with the Red Army. At Tsaritsin, with Comrade Voroshilov, he worked out the strategy that destroyed forever the hopes of the counter-revolutionaries and their imperialist backers. In doing so he had to discard the plan prepared by Trotsky and the old generals, which would have led the Red soldiers into a swamp of kulakism, into a trap. Trotsky was brusquely pushed aside, old generals were replaced by younger and thoroughly reliable comrades. From this the legend was started that he was 'rude' and 'ruthless'. A judge of men and of situations, his great knowledge of Marxism-Leninism and his understanding of the class struggle enabled him to take the course that saved the revolution and routed its enemies. If he had been a petty-bourgeois 'intellectual' he

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would have lost the revolution and earned the praise of the workers' enemies. But to save the revolution—that was 'rude', 'ruthless'.

In 1923, I met him for the first time. Lenin's illness had provided the enemies of the party with the opportunity of switching the party away from the path of Leninism—or so they thought. But they came up against the rock-like strength of Lenin's greatest disciple, Joseph Stalin. Let anyone who cares read the story of that period. The wild fulminations of the wreckers in the party and in the Press; the quiet crushing replies of Stalin that won for him increasingly the admiration and love of the party and the people of the Soviet Union. 'We will build Socialism in Russia', Lenin said. 'It can't be done', said the Mensheviks, 'You must wait till the capitalists develop heavy industry'. 'It can't be done', said the waverers, 'You must wait till the workers in advanced capitalist countries take power.' 'It can and will be done', said Stalin, and through the years his wise guidance has led the Soviet people along the Lenin road to a happy, joyful life.

In 1927, at the Tenth Anniversary of the Revolution I made a short speech to the Red Army in the Red Square. There had been rumours of a gang of traitors using the occasion to disrupt the demonstration and start street-fighting. My speech was devoted to unity against the enemy without and within. 'These agents of the capitalist enemy who seek to disrupt our forces, turn them out of your midst', I exclaimed. When my speech was translated, Comrade Stalin reached across the others and shook me warmly by the hand. Then a short time later I was asked to go over to the Mochovaya to speak against one of the gang who had appeared at an hotel window and was shouting at the demonstration. But when I got to the Mochovaya there was no need for my services. The workers had dealt very effectively with the situation. A group of them rushed into the hotel and had not several Red Army men been there, it would have fared ill with the egomaniac who attempted to disrupt the anniversary demonstration. When I got back to the Red Square and reported what had happened, I saw the lines crinkling round Stalin's eyes and the quiet smile on his lips as he listened to and nodded appreciation of the translation. But I will never forget him as I saw him that day. He knew, as we all knew, that the enemies of the party, the enemies of the Revolution, were going to make a desperate attempt to break up the 10th Anniversary demonstration, but he stood there calm and steady with an abiding faith in the working class, a faith justified then as it was so often after in the years that lay ahead. Calm and steady. Yes, there on

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the Lenin mausoleum in 1927, and there again in the much more exacting day 14 years later, with the Nazi hordes hammering at the gates of Moscow. See him there, strong and resolute, undaunted, inspiring his people to new courage and new great effort.

'We'll drive the enemy out of our Soviet land and out of every occupied country in Europe'. To the outside observers it was impossible. But this our comrade, with his knowledge of and faith in the people, could face and accomplish the impossible. The Great Patriotic War over, socialist reconstruction was taken in hand. What amazing progress has been made, what mighty undertakings have been carried through. In no capitalist country has the like ever been seen. But then the road they travel is the Lenin road that leads to the new and happy life only Communism can give.

Along that road they were confronted with many problems. The transformation of the age-long peasant economy to collective farming. Impossible! It can't be done. But it was done. Then the First Five Year Plan, designed to create heavy industry and make the Soviet Union independent of the imperialist countries. How the bourgeoisie and the bourgeois press sneered at this majestic conception. 'The craziest scheme that was ever promulgated'. 'It will break down before it is started'. But it didn't break down. In four years the great Five Year Plan was completed and the Soviet Union was well on the way to becoming the greatest industrial country in the world. From a ruined economy in a backward peasant country they made that amazing journey in a few short years, while here in Britain with statesmen like Baldwin, MacDonald, Attlee and Churchill we travel in the opposite direction. From being the wealthiest country in the world we are steadily drifting to ruin. A second Five Year Plan and then a third, and had it not been for the war and its fearful toll in life and the terrible devastation, the new society would by now have neared completion.

The final problems have been discussed and under Stalin's guidance the answers have been found. Mourn as we do his passing we take pride in the knowledge that three months before his death he published *The Economic Problems of Socialism in the U.S.S.R.* Here as anyone can read is the guide to the last stage on the road to the completed Communist society where, as was the dream of the pioneers, 'Each will give according to his ability and each will get according to his need'. So his life ended with his work completed, for the Party and the Soviet people still under his wise guidance will go forward, resolute as he was resolute—to the new truly free society of Marx and Engels, of Lenin and of Stalin.

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STALIN'S LEGACY

JAMES KLUGMANN

AS we mourn the death of the world's greatest working-class leader, we receive a magnificent gift and guide for those fighting in Britain in the cause of socialism—the first volume, in English, of Stalin's Collected *Works* *. This is a contribution of the very first order to the publication in the English language of the classics of creative Marxism; an outstanding event in the spread of Marxist thought and teaching in Britain.

The first volume, of what is to be a series of sixteen, contains the bulk of his writings in the period of 1901 to April 1907, many available in English for the first time. These are the writings of the young Stalin who inspired and led the early Bolshevik organisations in Transcaucasia, writings most of which first appeared in the illegal Georgian Marxist journals, mainly edited and directed by Stalin himself.

This was the period when Stalin organised and led the great May Day demonstration in Tiflis in 1901, hailed by Lenin's *Iskra* as an event of historic importance for the whole of the Caucasus; when *Brdzola* (Struggle), the first illegal Marxist newspaper in Georgia was founded on Stalin's initiative, second only to *Iskra* itself as a Marxist newspaper in Russia. Stalin created the Marxist organisation in Batum and the Batum Committee of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party, himself organising and leading the famous political demonstration of the Batum workers on March 9, 1902. He led the struggle against opportunism in the Transcaucasian labour movement, fighting for the unity of the workers of different nationalities—Georgians, Armenians, Azerbaijanians and Russians. Then came his arrest, exile to Siberia and escape. Returning illegally to the Caucasus in February, 1904, he led the huge strike of the Baku workers (December, 1904) and secured a collective agreement with the oil owners, first of its kind in the Russian working-class movement. He consistently and trenchantly fought against the Transcaucasian Mensheviks, defending and spreading the ideas and teachings of Lenin. It was the period when Stalin led the 1905 Revolution in the whole of Transcaucasia, the period when he first met Lenin, and when after the defeat of the 1905 Revolution,

* J. V. Stalin. *Works*, Vol. I, 1901-1907. (Foreign Languages Publishing House, Moscow; Lawrence & Wishart, pp. 426. 5s.). Date of publication to be announced shortly.

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side by side with Lenin, brilliantly defended the theoretical foundations of Marxism in his series of articles published under the title of *Anarchism or Socialism?* Stalin, though still a young man, showed himself already as an outstanding Bolshevik leader combining the deepest theoretical understanding with daily concrete practical leadership of the revolutionary struggle.

The study of this first volume of Stalin's works shows how consistently he defended and spread the teachings of Lenin, how from his early revolutionary apprenticeship he emerged as the companion-in-arms of Lenin. The illegal Marxist press edited by Stalin in Transcaucasia, especially the *Brdzola* (Struggle) and the *Proletariatis Brdzola,* both edited by Stalin, carried to the Transcaucasian workers the messages of Lenin's *Iskra* and *Proletary,* most often through the pen of Stalin, many of whose articles in these papers are reproduced in this first volume. His *Briefly About the Disagreements in the Party;* his two *Letters from Kutais* and his *Reply to a Social Democrat* brilliantly defend Lenin's conception of a proletarian Party as put forward in his famous *What is to be Done?* Stalin underlines again and again the need to give a socialist consciousness to the labour movement, to combine the labour movement with socialism:

> What is scientific socialism *without the working-class movement?*—A compass, which, if left unused, will only grow rusty and then will have to be thrown overboard.
>
> What is the working-class movement *without socialism?*—A ship without a compass which will reach the other shore in any case, but would reach it much sooner and with less danger if it had a compass.
>
> Combine the two and you will get a splendid vessel, which will speed straight towards the other shore and reach its haven unharmed.
>
> Combine the working-class movement with socialism and you will get a Social-Democrat movement which will speed straight towards the 'promised land'.
>
> (*Briefly about the Disagreements in the Party,* p. 104).

In his *Proletarian Class and the Proletarian Party* (January 1, 1905), Stalin discusses the first paragraph of the Party rules, supporting the organisational principles of the Party as Lenin had expounded them, and enlarging upon Lenin's ideas:

> Is not our Party a *fighting* Party? Since it is, is it not self-evident that our Party will not be satisfied with a platonic *acceptance* of its program, tactics and organisational views, that it will undoubtedly demand that its members should *apply* the views they have accepted. Hence, whoever wants to be a member of our Party cannot rest content with merely accepting our Party's program, tactical and organisational views, but must set about applying these views, putting them into effect.

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> But what does applying the Party's views mean for a Party member? When can he apply these views? Only when he is fighting, when he is marching with the whole Party at the head of the proletarian army. . . . Clearly, to be a Party member one must belong to one of the Party organisations.
>
> (*The Proletarian Class and the Proletarian Party*, pp. 66-67).

Throughout the period of preparation for and carrying through of the 1905 revolutionary struggle, Stalin consistently, brilliantly and very trenchantly, supported and expounded Lenin's strategy and tactics of the hegemony (leadership) of the proletariat in the bourgeois democratic revolution, the need for an armed insurrection and for the detailed preparation for such an insurrection, the aim of establishing a provisional revolutionary government. These views are brilliantly put forward in Stalin's clear, logical, powerful manner in many articles in this first volume of his works and especially in his *Present Situation and the Unity Congress of the Workers' Party*, published first in 1906.

Lenin himself quickly came to realise the great revolutionary capacities of the young Stalin, his deep theoretical understanding of Marxism and his brilliant powers as a practical leader of the struggle. 'Every district in Tiflis has been inundated with splendidly written leaflets in Russian, Georgian and Armenian', wrote Lenin's *Iskra* on September 15, 1902, referring to the activities of the Tiflis Marxists led by Stalin. Lenin often referred to the activities of the Transcaucasian Party organisation as a model of proletarian internationalism. Stalin's two *Letters from Kutais* of September-October, 1904, were forwarded to Lenin who referred to Stalin as the 'fiery Colchian' and the translations of these letters were found amongst the correspondence of Lenin and Krupskaya with the Bolshevik organisations of Russia. Stalin's *Reply to a Social Democrat* which appeared in the *Proletariatis Brdzola* in August, 1905, was praised by Lenin for its excellent formulations. Special mention of the activities of the Bolshevik organisations in Transcaucasia, led by Stalin, was made at the Third Congress of the R.S.D.L.P. in a Resolution on 'The Events in the Caucasus' moved by Lenin himself, in which he referred to these organisations as 'the most militant in our Party'.

One of the greatest features of all Stalin's work—his combination of the most profound theoretical understanding and constant theoretical explanation with the most consistent revolutionary practice and the utmost simplicity and clarity—is reflected throughout these earliest writings of the young Stalin. Here you find him

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as the revolutionary leader explaining in all detail the problems of preparing insurrection, organising fighting squads, arming the workers *(Armed Insurrection and our Tactics; Two Clashes; Marx and Engels on Insurrection).* You find him as the moving, passionate agitator calling on the workers to struggle, producing leaflets that stir to action, full of hatred of the cruel autocracy, and deepest feelings for the suffering of the people—simple, lucid, moving, stirring, with clear slogans leading to concrete immediate action *(Workers of the Caucasus, It is Time to Take Revenge; To Citizens Long Live the Red Flag; To all Workers).* Here you find Stalin the brilliant expounder of dialectical materialism, of the principles of scientific socialism, confounding the Anarchists and the Mensheviks, exposing their contradictions and their opportunism and explaining in words that all can understand, startling in their simplicity, stark in their clarity, the deepest issues of philosophy, of the strategy and tactics of the working-class struggle *(Anarchism or Socialism?).* From the style of Stalin alone—its simplicity, its illustrations from the daily experience of the workers, its logic, its humanity and warm love for those for whom he is writing and his bitter hatred for the enemies and misleaders of the working class, how much there is to learn!

The young Stalin was full of boundless confidence in the working class. 'The revolutionary proletariat alone is destined by history to liberate mankind and bring the world happiness', he wrote in the first work printed in this first volume, in the first issue of the illegal *Brdzola,* in September, 1901. 'Only the working class, and the people generally, who in the struggle have nothing to lose but their chains, they, only they, constitute a genuine revolutionary force', he writes in No. 2-3 of the same paper. 'But in order to be able to play this leading role the working class must organise in an *independent political party' (The R.S.D.P. and its Immediate Tasks,* p. 30). To organise this 'independent political party', Stalin, from the very first days bent all his great energy, and it is this task, the problems of it, and the fulfilment of it, that runs like a red thread through all this first volume of his collected works.

He sees the leading role of the working class, but he sees too that if *only* the working class can lead the struggle, the struggle can never be won by the working class *alone.* His early writings are full of discussion of the vital problem of winning allies for the working class, and isolating at each stage the essential enemy. He constantly directs his shafts against the splitters of the working

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class, against those who try and disarm the working class by harnessing them through class collaboration to the class enemy. He exposes the methods by which reaction tries to defeat the workers, using violence on the one hand and concessions on the other:

> The fight against the proletariat is waged by means of bullets and laws everywhere. . . . Recall the years 1824 and 1825 in constitutional England, when the law granting freedom to strike was being drafted, while at the same time the prisons were crammed with workers on strike.
>
> (*Factory Legislation and Proletarian Struggle,* December, 1906, p. 293).

But, he adds wisely, even when concessions are made and laws are passed to head off the struggle of the workers 'that, however, does not mean that the proletariat cannot utilise such laws'.

Already in his earliest writings, Stalin shows himself as a master of the national question. In his *Social-Democratic View of the National Question* of September, 1904, he foreshadows the ideas that he was to develop later in his *Marxism and the National Question*. Amongst his earliest leaflets is his *Long Live International Fraternity* (February, 1905), a stirring appeal for unity of Armenians, Tatars, Georgians and Russians, to unite against those who try to sow enmity between the nationalities of Russia, against those who organise pogroms against Armenians and Jews. *'Divide and rule'*, writes Stalin, 'such is the policy of the tsarist government'; and in its place he puts forward the glorious slogan *'Long Live International Fraternity'*.

Those who hate the working class and the people, those who hate peace, those who hate and fear the conception of international fraternity, have always hated and feared Stalin, the man of peace, of international fraternity, the champion of the working class and the people who labour. They feared and slandered him in his life and they feared and slandered him at his death. Stalin always liked to quote the watchword of the German Socialist Bebel: *'What pleases our enemies is harmful to us'*. (Vol. I, p. 185 and p. 269). The writings and the actions of Stalin were never pleasing to the enemies of peace and of the people. In these early works of the young Stalin, already comrade-in-arms of Lenin, already a great leader of the working-class movement, already deep theoretician of Marxism, there is a profound wealth of lessons for those who fight for socialism or who are building socialism in all countries. The publication in English of the first volume of Stalin's works is an outstanding event for the labour and progressive movement in this country.

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THE GENERAL STRIKE, 1926

J. V. STALIN

(Speech at a meeting of workers of the main railway workshops at Tiflis. June 8, 1926).

The first question is that of the causes of the strike in Britain. How could it happen that Britain, that land of capitalist might and unexampled compromises, should have lately become an arena of the greatest social conflicts. How could it happen that Great Britain, 'mistress of the seas', has become the country of the General Strike? I would like to point out a number of circumstances determining the inevitability of the general strike in Britain. The time has not yet come to give an exhaustive answer to this question. But we can and should point out certain decisive events which determined the necessity for the strike. Of these circumstances one might point to four as being the most important.

First. Britain formerly occupied a monopolist position among the capitalist states. Possessing a number of huge colonies and having what at that time was an exemplary industry, she was in a position to play the part of 'workshop of the world' and to rake in enormous super-profits. That was the period of 'peace and prosperity' for Britain. Capital pocketed superprofits, crumbs from these superprofits fell to the upper section of the British labour movement, the leaders of the British labour movement were gradually rendered docile by capital, and conflicts between labour and capital were usually settled by compromise.

But the further development of international capitalism, particularly the development of Germany, America and to some extent Japan, who made their appearance on the world market as competitors of Britain, struck at the very roots of Britain's former monopolist position. The war and the post-war crisis delivered a further decisive blow to the monopolist position of Britain. The superprofits became smaller, the crumbs falling to the British labour leaders began to run out. Voices demanding the lowering of the standard of living of the working class in Britain were more and more frequently heard. The period of 'peace and prosperity' gave place to a period of conflicts, lock-outs and strikes. The British worker began to swing to the left, resorting more and more to the method of direct struggle against capital.

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It is not difficult to understand that, in such a state of affairs, the brutal crack of the whip by the British mineowners, expressed in the threat of a lock-out, could not remain unanswered by the miners.

Secondly. The second circumstance consists in the restoration of international market connections * and the sharpening, in this connection, of the struggle of the capitalist groups for markets. Characteristic of the post-war crisis is that it broke up almost all the connections between the international market and the capitalist states, replacing these connections by a certain chaos in relations. Now, as a result of the temporary stabilisation of capital, this chaos is receding into the background and the old international market connections are gradually being restored. Whereas a few years ago the question was, how to restore the factories and works and get the workers to work for capital, it is now a question of securing markets and raw materials for the restored factories and works. In this connection the struggle for markets has intensified with fresh force, while the victory in this struggle is going to that group of capitalists and to that capitalist state where goods are cheaper and technique more advanced. And new forces are now coming forward on the markets: America, France, Japan, Germany, the British Dominions and the British colonies, which managed to develop their industry during the war and are now fighting for markets. Naturally, in view of all this, the easy extraction of profits from foreign markets, so long resorted to by Britain, has now become impossible. The old colonial method of monopolistic plundering of markets and sources of raw materials has had to give place to the new method of conquering the market with the help of cheap goods. Hence the endeavour of British capital to restrict production or, at any rate, not to extend it wholesale. Hence the vast army of unemployed in Britain, a constant feature of recent years. Hence the threat of unemployment, which agitates the British workers and tunes them up to a fighting key. Hence the lightning-like effect which the threat of a lock-out had on the workers generally and on the miners in particular.

Thirdly. The third circumstance consists in the endeavour of British capital to obtain a reduction in the cost of production in British industry and a cheapening of commodities at the expense of the interests of the British working class. The fact that the miners were the target of the main blow in this case cannot be

* i.e., after their disruption by the first world war.—Trans.

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called an accident. British capital attacked the miners not only because the coal industry is badly equipped as regards technique and requires 'rationalising', but primarily because the miners have always been, and still remain, the vanguard of the British proletariat. To bridle this vanguard, to lower wages and lengthen the working day, in order, having dealt with this vanguard, then to put a curb on other detachments of the working class also—that was the strategy of British capital. Hence that heroism with which the British miners are conducting their strike. Hence that unexampled readiness which the British workers have displayed in supporting the miners by means of the general strike.

Fourthly. The fourth circumstance is the rule of the Conservative Party in Britain, the party which is the most malignant enemy of the working class. It goes without saying that every other bourgeois government would, in the main, have done the same as the Conservative government in crushing the working class. But it is without doubt also that only such sworn enemies of the working class as the Conservatives could so easily and so cynically have entered upon such an unexampled challenge to the whole of the British working class as they did when they made the threat of a lock-out. It should now be regarded as fully proven that the British Conservative Party not only wanted the lock-out and the strike, but had spent almost a year preparing for them. It postponed the attack on the miners in July last year, considering the moment 'unsuitable'. But it made preparations during the whole period since then, piling up stores of coal, organising blacklegs, suitably working up public opinion, in order to strike out at the miners in April of this year. Only the Conservative Party could have taken such a perfidious step.

The Conservative Party wormed its way into the government on the basis of forged documents and provocations. * On the very first day after its advent to power it attacked Egypt, using every means of provocation. For a year now it has been carrying on direct war against the Chinese people, resorting to the tried means of colonial methods of plunder and oppression. It is sparing no means in order to render impossible any rapprochement between the peoples of the Soviet Union and the peoples of Great Britain, steadily preparing the elements of a possible intervention. Now it is attacking the working class of its own country, preparing the attack with a zeal worthy of a better cause, over a period of fully twelve months.

* The reference is to the forged 'Zinoviev Letter' of 1924.—Trans.

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The Conservative Party cannot live without conflicts inside and outside Britain. After this, can one be surprised that the British workers replied with blow for blow? These, in the main, are the circumstances which determined the inevitability of the strike in Britain.

The British general strike was defeated for a number of reasons, of which the following, at least, should be pointed out:

First. The British capitalists and Conservative Party, as the course of the strike has shown, proved in general to be more experienced, more organised, more resolute and, therefore, stronger than the British workers and their leaders in the persons of the General Council and the so-called Labour Party. The leaders of the working class proved not to be equal to the tasks of the working class.

Secondly. The British capitalists and the Conservative Party went into this tremendous social conflict fully armed and undoubtedly prepared, while the leaders of the British labour movement were caught unawares by the mineowners' lock-out and did nothing, or next to nothing, in the way of preparatory work. Here it should be noted that not more than a week prior to the conflict the leaders of the working class were expressing their conviction that there would be no conflict.

Thirdly. The staff of the capitalists—the Conservative Party—conducted the fight unitedly and in an organised manner, striking blows at the decisive points of the struggle, while the staff of the labour movement, the Trades Union Congress General Council and its 'political commission'—the Labour Party—proved to be internally demoralised and degenerate. It is known that the head people of this staff were found to be either direct traitors to the miners and the British working class in general (Thomas, MacDonald, Henderson and Co.), or spineless fellow-travellers of these traitors who feared the struggle and still more the victory of the working class (Purcell, Hicks, etc.).

It may be asked, how could it happen that the powerful British proletariat, which carried on the fight with unexampled heroism, proved to have leaders who were either capable of being bribed, or cowardly or simply spineless? This is a question of great importance. Such leaders did not appear all of a sudden. They grew out of the labour movement, they passed through a definite schooling for labour leaders in Britain, the schooling of that period when

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British capital, raking in superprofits, was able to make a fuss of the labour leaders and use them to make compromises with the British working class; moreover, by coming close to the bourgeoisie in their ways of life and status, these leaders of the working class thereby broke away from the working masses, turned their backs on them and ceased to understand them. These are the kind of leaders who have been blinded by the glamour of capitalism, whom the power of capital has overwhelmed, and who dream of 'becoming somebody' and of joining the 'people of substance'.

Without doubt these leaders—if I may call them that—are an echo of the past who now do not suit the new situation. Without doubt they will in time be compelled to give way to new leaders who do correspond to the fighting spirit and heroism of the British proletariat. Engels was right when he called such men bourgeois leaders.

Fourthly. The staff of British capitalism—the Conservative Party—understood that the gigantic strike of the British workers was a fact of tremendous political importance, that a serious struggle could be waged against such a strike only by measures of a political character, that in order to break the strike the authority of the King and the authority of the House of Commons and the Constitution must all be invoked, that the strike could not be ended without mobilising the troops and proclaiming a state of emergency. Meanwhile the staff of the British labour movement—the General Council—did not, or would not, understand this simple thing, or were afraid to admit it, assuring all and sundry that the General Strike was a purely industrial dispute, that it did not want or intend to transform the struggle into a political struggle, that it was not thinking of striking at the general staff of British capital, the Conservative Party, and that it—the General Council—did not intend to raise the question of power.

The General Council thereby doomed the strike to inevitable failure. For, as history has shown, a general strike which is not developed on the lines of political struggle must inevitably fail.

Fifthly. The staff of the British capitalists understood that international aid to the British strike constituted a mortal danger to the bourgeoisie, while the General Council did not understand, or pretended not to understand, that the strike of the British workers could only be won with the aid of international proletarian solidarity. Hence the refusal of the General Council to accept the

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financial aid of the workers of the Soviet Union (*) and of other countries.

Such a gigantic strike as the General Strike in Britain could yield tangible results given two basic conditions at any rate: the development of the strike on political lines and the transformation of the strike into an act of struggle of the proletarians of all the advanced capitalist countries against capital. But the British General Council, with the peculiar 'wisdom' distinguishing it, rejected both these conditions, thereby pre-determining the failure of the General Strike.

Sixthly. Without doubt a role of no little importance was played by the more than ambiguous behaviour of the Second International and of the Amsterdam Trade Union International in the matter of aid to the British General Strike. In essence, the platonic decisions of these organisations of the Social Democrats concerning aid to the strike amounted to the actual refusal of all and any financial help in practice, for in no other way than as ambiguous behaviour on the part of the social democratic International can one explain the fact that the trade unions of Europe and America together contributed not more than one-eighth of the amount of financial aid which the trade unions of the Soviet Union found it possible to afford their British brothers. I need not dwell on the aid of another nature, in the form of stopping the import of coal, in which respect the Amsterdam Trade Union International is literally behaving in blackleg fashion.

Seventhly. There is likewise no doubt that the weakness of the British Communist Party was of no small importance in the defeat of the General Strike. It should be said that the British Communist Party is one of the best sections of the Communist International. It should be pointed out that its policy throughout the time of the strike in Britain was perfectly correct. It must, however, also be admitted that its prestige among the British workers is still weak. And this circumstance could not fail to play a fatal part in the course of the General Strike.

These are the circumstances, at any rate the most important of them, which we are able to ascertain at the present time and which determined the undesirable outcome of the General Strike in Britain.

(To be concluded next month)

* The Soviet trade unions on May 5, 1926, called on their members to subscribe a quarter of a day's pay in aid of the British workers. That day they transferred £26,427. On May 7 they sent a further £200,000. On May 9 the General Council rejected the aid. The money was returned to the U.S.S.R. Subsequently these amounts and others to a total of £1,100,000 were sent to the Miners' Federation of Great Britain in aid of the locked-out British miners, and accepted.—Trans.

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MR. EDEN KOW-TOWS

QUÆSTOR

THE death of Joseph Stalin and of his outstanding pupil Klement Gottwald would by themselves be sufficient to make March, 1953, a sad and memorable month. But the picture of contrasting policies, in the camp of Socialism and the camp of imperialism respectively, which the month brought out looks like making it one of tragedy for the British people.

Stalin's funeral on March 9, was made the occasion of a solemn reaffirmation of the Soviet Union's desire for peace, friendship and co-operation with the capitalist countries.

Soviet foreign policy, said Malenkov, is 'based on the Lenin-Stalin thesis of the possibility of prolonged co-existence and peaceful competition of the two different systems'. It is the main concern of the Soviet Government 'not to permit a new war, to live in peace with all countries'.

Soviet foreign policy, said Beria, will continue to be 'the policy of international co-operation and development of business relations with all countries on a mutual basis'.

'Our Soviet State has no aggressive aims whatever, and for its part does not interfere in the affairs of other States', said Molotov. Repeating the essential points of the two earlier statements, Molotov added: 'Such a foreign policy accords with the fundamental interests of the Soviet people and at the same time with the interests of all other peace-loving peoples'.

Were the American and British Governments in earnest about their professions of peace, these solemn declarations by the Prime Minister, Home Minister and Foreign Minister of the new Soviet Government would have been the occasion for an immediate diplomatic approach with a view to negotiating a settlement of outstanding world problems. But that was not the course they adopted.

There would be no change in American policy, said Secretary of State Dulles. No alteration in the U.S. Government's 'attitude to the cold war', he said. It would have 'more chances of success now'. Malenkov's speech showed 'a feeling of insecurity' and was 'whistling in the dark', said American officials (*Daily Telegraph* Washington cable, March 11). The Soviet leaders 'blew loudly the trumpet of peace', sneered the Voice of America.

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As the master, so the man. There was 'no hint' in the Soviet leaders' speeches of 'any relaxation in the cold war' (*The Times* diplomatic correspondent, March 10). 'We have always been ready to negotiate. We still are', Eden said at a Press dinner in New York on March 12—and was given the lie, that same evening, by Churchill who refused to answer a request by a Labour M.P. that 'in view of the conciliatory nature of the first statement on foreign policy by the new Prime Minister of the U.S.S.R.' he should now approach Eisenhower and Malenkov for a joint meeting.

As though to add point to the refusal of the proffered hand of peace, the next few days after Stalin's funeral were marked by a series of air 'incidents', of which the least that can be said is that, if the American military authorities had decided to stage provocative action in order to stir up anti-Soviet feeling and poison the atmosphere, the 'incidents' could not have been more timely.

Then, on March 15, at the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R., Malenkov made his policy statement on endorsement as Prime Minister. He returned to the theme of his funeral oration. Once again he emphasised that the Soviet Government would pursue 'a policy of collaboration with all countries and of developing business links with them on the basis of mutual consideration for each other's interests'. But he went further, declaring that there was no question which could not be settled by peaceful means on the basis of the mutual agreement of the countries concerned, specifically including among them the United States of America.

How did the American bosses react to this offer, which if their constant mouthings of peace were genuine would have led to immediate negotiations? 'Not impressed', said the State Department officials next day: let Malenkov 'solve six problems' first—allied planes, the Korean war, an Austrian peace treaty, etc. etc. (Reuter, March 15). 'Protestations of peaceful intent are not new': let Malenkov back up his words with 'acts of peace', they added (*The Times,* March 17).

The obedient lackeys followed suit. The *Daily Telegraph* (March 16) sneered at 'Malenkov's repeated, though purely tactical appeals' as only designed to avoid trouble 'for some time to come'. 'The Peace-Monger of Moscow' jeered the *Manchester Guardian,* advising its readers not to take Malenkov's assurances 'at face value'; and so on.

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As though to add point, once again, to this new rejection of the offer of negotiation, the First Lord of the Admiralty on March 16, sprang on the House of Commons a horrific story of the 'very powerful' Soviet Navy, 'second largest in the world', most of it concentrated in the Baltic and Northern seas, which is 'of particular import to Britain'. As was to be expected, 'after hearing all this, the House naturally wanted to know how this country was intending to meet any potential danger' (*The Times* Westminster correspondent, March 17).

'Naturally', the House forgot how it had been bamboozled for two years by successive Ministers about the 'four millions in the Soviet armed forces', to justify crushing armaments burdens and the consistent rejection of Soviet peace proposals—until the American chief of staff blurted out, at the beginning of March, that the figure was only two-and-a-half millions. Naturally also, the House forgot how the country was bamboozled by the armaments kings about mythical German dreadnoughts, in the years when the first world war was being hatched (see H. N. Brailsford's *War of Steel and Gold,* Chapter II).

The question may arise, what advantage does the British people gain—or more precisely, what does the Churchill Government hope to gain—from slavish acceptance of the American policy of hostility towards the U.S.S.R.? To much that has been written on this subject, March 1953 has added a new chapter, in the shape of the visit to Washington by Foreign Secretary Eden and Chancellor of the Exchequer Butler. Out of the fog of official ambiguities, false trails and revealing denials that have followed the visit, there can now be sifted the following:

1. Butler and Eden asked for more imports into the U.S.A. and American markets and lower U.S. tariffs: 'trade, not aid'. The Americans replied that this was a 'dangerous slogan', that no more than a small tariff reduction can be expected, and in fact that they themselves want a bigger share of the world market. They refused to commit themselves.

2. Butler and Eden asked for financial support for the pound sterling, submitting the schemes worked out at the Commonwealth Conference. The Americans paid Butler a heap of compliments for his 'able and lucid exposition of intricate problems', read the British Ministers a lecture on the need for a 'sound internal policy' (i.e. for more economy at the expense of schoolchildren, widows and orphans, students, the woman about to have a baby, workmen

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trying to maintain wage levels, etc.), and promised 'an intensive examination and review' of the British proposals, 'and possible alternative suggestions, in order to arrive at a sound judgment with respect to the specific courses of action which *might* be taken'. In plain English, they refused to commit themselves (except that they would 'encourage the flow of investment abroad'—as though we didn't know!).

3. Eden and Butler asked for confirmation of what they secured *a year ago*: that American bombers would not attack the U.S.S.R. from British bases except by joint decision of the two governments. The Americans graciously agreed.

4. Eden and Butler asked for American support in pressing a robber settlement of the oil dispute on Persia. The Americans were pleased to confirm that they supported Britain in *getting herself still more heavily branded as the enemy of the Persian people.*

5. Eden and Butler asked for American support in evading the British obligation, given 70 times since 1882, to evacuate the Suez Canal zone. The Americans gladly agreed to support Britain in *making herself still more unmistakably branded as the enemy of the Egyptian people.*

6. In exchange for getting a promise of the same amount of foreign aid from Congress as last year, Eden and Butler accepted the American proposal that Britain should make trade with China still more difficult. The appropriate measures were taken with lightning speed. Thus the Americans secured a public demonstration that Britain, though maintaining diplomatic relations with China, *is an enemy of the Chinese people.*

7. Finally (we learn from the well-informed *Daily Telegraph* Washington correspondent on March 16) 'both sides agreed that no honourable or stable accommodation could be reached with Russia unless the West negotiated from strength. A vitally important element in Western strength was a sound economic base on which to establish its military structure'. And from *The Times* man at Washington we already knew, a week before, that it would be probably 'many months' before the Americans would be ready to state their views as to what that 'sound economic base' should be. In other words Britain—with her vital interest in trade with the U.S.S.R. and the People's Democracies, with her dependence on a pacified Europe and Asia for markets, with her working-class tradition of friendship with the Soviet workers—has been committed by

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Eden and Butler, for an indefinite period, to figure as *an enemy of the Soviet people.*

Even as an exposition of the art of diplomacy, the Eden-Butler mission represents an incredible fiasco. To return empty-handed in questions of trade and finance, with nothing to show but last year's promises regarding the use of bases in Britain and last year's dollar aid for a crushing armaments burden—and in exchange to accept the burden of popular hatred in Persia, Egypt, China and the U.S.S.R., with the American prompter laughing up his sleeve in the wings—did it need education at Eton and Marlborough, Oxford and Cambridge for that? But for the British people the fiasco is still more serious. For it explains the hostile reception of the new Soviet peace offers: it holds out the prospect of continuing aggressive hostility to the U.S.S.R.: it puts the British *people* in the position of pulling chestnuts out of the fire for the Americans in the Middle East and the Far East, it spells bigger armaments burdens and more attacks on working-class standards of living ('sound internal policy')—did not Butler, on his return to England on March 16, announce a 'big extra drive for the dollar market'?

Yes, March 1953 will be long remembered, to the cost of the British people.

FROM THE *LABOUR MONTHLY* OF 25 YEARS AGO

A. J. COOK ON THE MINERS' SIX-HOUR DAY

I sincerely hope that the International Miners' Conference, to be held at Nîmes at the end of May of this year, will face up to the situation boldly and prepare the necessary machinery to enforce either a seven or six-hour day, bank to bank, and a minimum wage that will give economic security, with uniform holidays, pensions, compensation, and insurance for the men in the industry. That would be the first step towards international unification of mine-workers' conditions, through the power of the international miners' organisations. Resolutions that are mere pious expressions of opinion will be useless at the present juncture, for they will not create the confidence necessary for building up the international organisation.

From *The World Wide Coal Crisis,* by A. J. Cook, April, 1928.

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COLD WAR AGAINST BRITAIN

Commander EDGAR P. YOUNG, R.N. Retired.

The spectre of excess capacity is already hanging over various sections of the engineering industry. In the past twelve months supply has caught up with demand in a growing number of products, and suggestions for cutting back production are again being heard.

THUS wrote the Financial Editor of the *Manchester Guardian* on February 23; two days earlier he had quoted Mr. A. W. Grant, chairman of the Engineering and Allied Employers' Association in the West of England, as having said on February 20: 'At the moment unemployment and short-time working is largely confined to the motor-car industry. But the same factors affecting that industry have spread to almost every other section of engineering. But for the rearmament programme, there would already be tens of thousands of workers unemployed. And, rearmament programme or not, widespread unemployment within the next twelve months is certain to result unless the present trend in exports can be halted and our sales abroad increased'.

The danger is grave, and not only from the point of view of the workers who are threatened with large-scale unemployment, for it must be recalled that the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. R. A. Butler, is counting on 'an increase of 40 per cent. in engineering exports' to correct Britain's very unfavourable trade balance, and as the Financial Editor of the *Manchester Guardian* pointed out in his earlier article (February 21), 'there is no evidence yet that this increase in engineering exports will be feasible . . . we are still earning less with engineering exports than we did a year ago'. Just how grave is this danger is brought out by an article by Mr. R. A. Dudman, an Oxford agricultural economist, in the current Westminster Bank review—which also suggests, without actually stating it, how that danger may be averted.

Dealing specifically with the agricultural engineering industry—in which cuts of as much as 50 per cent. have already been suggested—Mr. Dudman remarks first on the remarkable degree to which the capacity of that industry has been increased since the war. 'Total production of agricultural implements and tractors has risen from about £4 millions, in 1938, to something like £112 millions in 1952. Allowing for changes in prices, this means that the output has increased about ten times since before the war'. The

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very great importance of this remarkable expansion to Britain's export trade is brought out by the fact that by last year (1952) exports of the products of this industry had increased to almost £60 millions, as compared with a bare £2 millions in 1938, the main item being tractors, which represented about 60 per cent. of the total output, but 73 per cent. of the exports. Mr. Dudman points out, however, that this good business has resulted from a demand, e.g. for tractors, which is now declining, and remarks that 'if present economic and agricultural conditions continue, the annual replacement demand is likely to amount to 52,000 farm tractors and 20,000 market-garden tractors, which is equal only to about a quarter of the industry's potential output'. 'In other words', writes the Financial Editor of the *Manchester Guardian*, 'the agricultural implement industry faces a decade of weakened demand for its products', from which there is one way out: the industry must try to sell more abroad, but the opportunities of succeeding in this have been narrowed since the revival of West German competition, and therefore, he might well have added, the need is urgent for securing an alteration of the 'present economic and agricultural conditions', (and especially of the former) which, as Mr. Dudman remarked, are responsible for the hopeless impasse.

It need hardly be pointed out, but should not be overlooked, that what has been written in this article about the agricultural engineering industry is broadly true also of most sections of the engineering industry, such as those producing motor-vehicles, machine-tools, electrical plant and equipment, textile machinery, and ships. All alike are threatened, 'rearmament programme or not', within the next twelve months, with the advent of 'a decade of weakened demand' for their products, aggravated by growing competition from rival industries in West Germany and Japan, largely financed with U.S. capital (if not actually American-owned) and with wage-rates and taxation for social purposes which compare very unfavourably with those prevalent still in Britain.

This much is fairly generally recognised now in Britain, both by the employers and by the workers, and is candidly written about, at last, in the papers. What is not written about in the papers, however, and what must surely be realised by the employers, at least, though not by most of the workers (it is shameful that it has not been explained to them by those whom they pay to do 'research' for them at Transport House), is that the situation is not fortuitous. It is the result of deliberate U.S. policy, by which I mean that it

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has been planned by U.S. financiers and industrialists *as a deliberate hostile act against their British rivals.*

To make this point clear I would ask the reader to ask himself the simple question: how is it that the U.S. motor-car industry, for instance, while paying very high wages (by British standards) to its workers, can nevertheless capture and hold export markets against British competition by selling its products at lower prices? The answer, it is well known, is that this has been made possible by the fact that the U.S. producer has a guaranteed market, within the U.S.A., in the main, but to some extent also in countries which, though nominally 'independent', are virtually 'colonies' of the U.S.A., for a very considerable output. Sure of this profitable market, he can afford to go in for mass-production in a very big way, introducing the latest kinds of mechanisation, and thus so to increase the productivity of his workers that he can afford to pay them relatively high wages and still to market his products abroad at relatively low prices. His British rival has been unable, in the past, to compete with him on equal terms, because he has not enjoyed the said favourable conditions—favourable also, it may be noted, for the workers.

During the last war, however, the British engineering industry was very extensively modernised, mechanisation being introduced for the purpose of economising in man-power, and a vast body of new labour (including, notably, large numbers of women, hitherto relatively unproductive, from an industrial point of view) was trained to operate it. Britain emerged from the war, therefore, with an enormously enhanced productive capacity in her engineering industry. With Germany and Japan virtually out of action in the engineering field, and France and Italy very largely so, she was in a position to make full use of that capacity, after the delay, which need not have been a long one, required for the 'switching' of her factories from war to peace-time production, as would seem, in fact, to have been done in the case of her agricultural engineering industry, at any rate.

If this had been done—and especially if it had been done on 'planned' lines, as might reasonably have been expected during the post-war period in office of two Labour Governments—Britain's present economic position would certainly be far better than it is, and it is even possible that Britain might by now have achieved solvency and prosperity. From the very first, however, Britain refrained deliberately from exploiting this advantage, 'because it

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might help the Russians'—these were the very words used to me by the Permanent Under-Secretary at the head of the 'Export Promotion Department' (!) of the Board of Trade, Mr. A. E. Welch, on January 2, 1946, when I went to see him, at the instance of the late Sir Stafford Cripps, then President of the Board of Trade, to discuss a Memorandum which I had submitted to the latter showing him just what, and where (i.e. in Eastern Europe) were the export markets which he was constantly saying 'we must find, if we are to maintain our standard of living'.

Thus weakened by her own foolish policy, Britain has become progressively more dependent on U.S. 'charity', and progressively more subject to the harmful terms accompanying that 'charity', dictated by commercial rivals who feared her competition, on the one hand, and on the other, feared the repercussions which its success would have on their profits and on employer-worker relations in their own country. The results, as already described, may be regarded with satisfaction by Britain's pseudo-friends in the U.S.A.—and also by her ex-enemies in West Germany, such as Herr Krupp, and in Japan. If they are maintained, it can mean for the British people, and especially for the British workers, nothing but lowered standards of living and economic insecurity. This has, I suggest, been all along the intention of Britain's so-called 'benefactors' in the U.S.A., whose 'cold war', like Hitler's policy and subsequent war, is directed against every country and every people (not excluding the American people). More cunning even than the Nazis, moreover, who used their 'fifth columnists' only to sap the resistance of their victims, these dollar-imperialists of Wall Street use theirs, in the Conservative and Labour parties alike, to secure the active collaboration of their victims in a war against themselves, persuading them, by the blaring use of Dr. Goebbels' anti-Soviet and anti-Communist lying propaganda, that by collaboration in a policy to their own despite they will save themselves!

The way out of this tragic situation is still open for Britain, despite the presence on her hospitable shores of a considerable U.S. army of occupation. The way is still open before her to freedom, to solvency, and to such stable prosperity as her people have never yet known. Her ability to take advantage of the opportunity still presenting itself, though diminished by her past folly, is still considerable. Let us consider for example, her agricultural engineering industry, since important figures in relation to it have been quoted in this article. 'If present economic and agricultural conditions

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continue', wrote Mr. Dudman in the Westminster Bank review, that industry is faced with an early prospect of the demand for its output being equal to about a quarter of its potential. That would mean the laying-off of a large part of the workers in the industry, or short-time working for a large number of them. It would mean also an increase in its costs of production, even if wages were not reduced, because plants could not be operated at maximum efficiency, and therefore an increase of its prices. This would aggravate even further its export difficulties. But if the 'economic and agricultural conditions' were changed, for example, by the export of its products into markets from which they are at present withheld (at the behest of the U.S.A. and because of the prejudices of Mr. A. E. Welch) the situation would be transformed in Britain's favour.

Agricultural engineering would find itself with a guaranteed market far greater than that enjoyed by its American competitors, and much more reliable, of some 800 million people, with a rapidly rising purchasing capacity, whose 'annual replacement demand' will soon be—if it is not already—sufficient to absorb the whole of, indeed more than, its potential output, thus enabling it to keep all its plant working constantly at maximum efficiency and to reduce its production costs to a minimum. In such circumstances it would not be difficult to provide, i.e. from the normal profits, the capital required for improving still further its productive efficiency, thus to increase the productivity of its workers and to make it possible to pay them more while keeping export prices at their present competitive level, if not even reducing them. The same kind of thing would take place, in these changed conditions, in many other sections of the engineering industry, among which may be noted particularly, perhaps, those producing motor-vehicles, textile machinery, machine-tools, electrical plant and equipment, and ships.

All these sections are now threatened with unemployment because of increasing difficulty in exporting into the limited markets to which they are now restricted. In all of them that difficulty is advanced as an 'argument' against the granting of wage-increases which it is admitted are overdue and deserved. The whole of Britain's splendid engineering industry, in fact, would find itself placed in such a position that there would no longer be any argument as to whether it can afford to let its workers have that 'extra £2 a week': it would be offering them far bigger rises, in order to attract men and women into the industry to meet its increased

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demands (not for armaments-production), and still it would be quoting prices which would compete with those quoted by its West German and Japanese, or by its American, rivals and thus staking its claim also in the markets of the West. And what is more is that Britain as a whole would be benefiting from this transformation—the whole of the British people would be enjoying improved standards of living (paid for by themselves, not by the robbing of colonial peoples or by selling themselves as 'cannon-fodder' in a war planned by Wall Street millionaires for the protection of their vast, illgotten fortunes). For Britain would be exporting, to pay for her necessary imports of foodstuffs and raw materials, goods in which the highest proportion of the cost is represented by the skill, good-workmanship and efficient production of the worker.

Book Reviews

THREAT TO BRITAIN

America Over Britain, by Philip Bolsover. (124 pp. Lawrence and Wishart. *5s.*).

THE author opens in these words:—'This is not a complicated book. Its purpose is simple; its aim is broad. It seeks to illustrate with facts and arguments the danger that faces us all—a threat that has become part of our daily life almost without our knowledge'.

I congratulate the author unreservedly. He has admirably accomplished the aim he set himself. He has rendered a much needed service in a fashion that commands our admiration. It is written in the style that reminds me of Brailsford and Robert Blatchford at their best—a style that is worthy of emulation but which today has most unfortunately almost disappeared among Socialist writers. Its 124 pages contain an armoury of facts with what is invaluable—authorities and dates which enable one to quote with confidence. The arguments, reinforced by the style in which they are stated, bring conviction. Here you will find Mr. Truman's warning about the growing and dangerous concentration of immense economic power in the hands of just a few men in the United States. We also learn the reasons why James Stewart Martin, Chief of the Decartelisation Branch of the U.S. Military Government in Germany after the war, did not succeed in his job.

The Labour Government were no more successful with their nationalisation proposals in the British Zone because even these were distasteful to the Wall Street financiers. Mr. Bevin and the Labour Government, capitulated, just as MacDonald, Snowden and Thomas did in 1931. Mr. Forrestal, U.S. Minister of Defence and former President of a Wall Street firm, made it perfectly clear in his speech of May 7, 1947, that the Americans were not allowing nationalisation. This fact will surely make the leaders and the rank and file of the Labour Party think furiously of the powers of democracy. It hardly needed the author to remind us—but memories are short—what Mr. Truman and Admiral Carney, now Commander of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation forces in South Europe and the

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Mediterranean, proposed to do in the event of the General Elections in France and Italy resulting in the prospect of the Communist Party gaining power. Who said the people ruled by the exercise of democratic suffrage? The facts regarding the American Air Bases across the world, and the quotations of the interview with General Eisenhower and from the important journals, the *Washington Post* and the *Wall Street Journal,* should surely destroy the last vestiges of belief that American capital is engaged in preparing a war of defence.

I think chapter five, 'Fifth Column among the Workers', could with great advantage have contained additional authentic quotations from the decisions of International Trade Union bodies such as the Trade Secretariats and the I.C.F.T.U. But the workers will find many facts respecting the attitude of the so-called Trade Union Internationals that will open their eyes. These coupled with what I have referred to previously on Cartels, Nationalisation, and General Elections, should completely destroy many illusions. I also think there should have been an additional chapter commencing with the quotation from Mr. Virgil Jordan on the U.S.A. imperialistic role in the 20th century, and an exposure made of its purely selfish unidealistic strategy in the first and second World Wars, contrasting such with the role of the Soviet Union from 1917.

No review can do this book real justice. It has to be read and its contents reflected on seriously. The British Trade Union, Labour and Co-operative Movement could do worse with some of its financial resources than guarantee this book a circulation equal to that of *Britain for the British* by Blatchford.

J. B. FIGGINS.

THEY DEFEATED FORD

Brother Bill McKie, by Phillip Bonsky (International Publishers, New York. No price given).

OFTEN as I travel around I meet people in various sections of the movement who try to excuse or even justify their own lack of faith by talking about the 'apathy' of the workers. As a matter of fact, the workers, as a whole, are never apathetic. Always, however difficult the situation, there are always sections of them probing and searching for a way out of the jungle of capitalism. Always there are sections of them in action of one kind or another. That there aren't more at the present time is not to be wondered at. The whole powerful machinery of the labour movement, under right-wing leadership, is directed towards suppressing all working class activities. The latest is a condemnation (not a ban, says Phillips) of the *Tribune* 'Brains Trust'. Anything that can stimulate interest, anything calculated to arouse the spirit of the working class is not in keeping with the policy of the Labour Party as expressed by Morrison, Attlee and Co. 'Thou Shalt Not' has become the watchword of these creatures of capitalism. So we can understand the difficulties confronting miners, engineers and other workers in face of the Tory offensive and how easy it may be for individuals here and there to fall into the deep of pessimism.

But if there are any such within the reach of readers of *Labour Monthly,* persuade them to get a copy of *Brother Bill McKie* which gives the story of how the Automobile Union was built in Fords. Ford swore there would never be a union in the great Ford Factory at River Range, Detroit. Bill McKie said there would. Ford had the

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power and what power. Bill McKie had one weapon, all-powerful, more potent even than the atom bomb. He had an abiding, unshakable faith in the working class. Bill took the chair for me forty-five years ago in Edinburgh, when we were both members of the S.D.F. In 1927, he went on a visit to Detroit to visit a married daughter and there his great fight started. Here is what he saw when he went to look for a job in Fords:

> Before him was an incredible sight. He stared, unable for a moment to make up his mind to enter. The field was as big as a city block. Penned behind high wire fences, and milling among the cinders and torn paper flying forlornly around the field, six thousand men stood or sat, squatted or slept on their feet, always moving restlessly like a gray army, dirty and tired as the dawn that came with no thunder over the factory stacks.

They were waiting for the employment office opening, waiting for work. All night they had waited and many of them had waited night after night. Bill got a job as a sheet metal worker and got his first sight of the Ford conveyor belt and—'he saw for the first time in his life, the—Ford Face. It was a human mask. . . . The eyes looked at nothing but the job. They showed nothing—no feeling—no thought. Along with the Ford Face was the Ford Silence. . . . No man spoke to fellow man. . . . There was a Ford Whisper—but he didn't hear it that day. Silence like glass lay over the vast yard'. Bill asked a worker about a union and nearly frightened him out of his judgment. No union. No possibility of a union. Ford's right-hand man was Harry Bennett—the Hoodlum Chief. Ford owned Detroit and controlled its mayor and councillors but he always was haunted by the spectre of working class organisation. Harry Bennett was the man above all others he relied on. Harry got on to the Parole Board and got all the worst criminals paroled. Read this:

> Bennett had under his control an army of over 8,000 ex-prisoners. They included every criminal skill on record; he had experts in every field. For he had men on his payroll who had been arrested for forgery, embezzlement, burglary, robbery, murder, manslaughter, drug-peddling, rape, indecent exposure—and on down to Z.

This was Ford's Security Force, this was the gang that Brailsford and the I.L.P. claimed to have ousted Marx.

In 1936 when I was in Windsor, Canada, just across the river from Detroit, Bill McKie and a group of lads from Fords came over to spend an evening with me. As they spoke about what they were up against it seemed as the task they had taken on was the next thing to impossible. Ten years later my wife and I were in Detroit. Bill McKie took us along on a visit to the Ford Local Headquarters where we met and talked with the chairman and the leading Committee men. Surely never such a change in such a short time in any great capitalist industry. Last year, Ruether, the renegade, who rose to power in the American Automobile Workers Union, on the back of Bill

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McKie, acting for, and with the support of, the Un-American Committee, dismissed all the officials of the Ford Local and put his own stooges in their place. He kept them there six months and then when he thought them firmly established he called elections. The Ford workers voted, but with Bill McKie in every mind. All Ruether's stooges went out. All the former (Left-wing) members were re-elected. Read this book and you will agree with William Z. Foster, who writes a Foreword, when he said:—

> Bill McKie, the central figure of this book, is a veritable symbol of the indomitable fighting spirit of the working class and of its determination eventually to emancipate itself.

Read this book and you will understand this paragraph from Page 181; it was after the strike and the defeat of Ford and his thug, Harry Bennett:

> He was old Bill McKie back to work as an expert sheet-metal man. He came back as that, and as a Communist. 'There goes Bill McKie' they echoed up and down the plant. 'He beat Ford', and as they touched him passing by, they knew they were touching themselves in this Communist. And so they handed him, smile by smile, down the pathways of victory through the shop.

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He is retired from the factory now but still active for the cause. A shake of your hand Bro. Bill McKie. You're the grandest oldtimer of the working class movement.

W.G.

QUAKERS REPORT ON U.S.S.R.

Quakers Visit Russia, edited by Kathleen Lonsdale. (146 pp. Friends' House, Euston Road, London, N.W.1. *3s. 6d.*).

THIS is an honest book by people for whom the U.S.S.R. in many respects is beyond understanding. The reader should not be surprised at this. Society in the U.S.S.R. is Socialist. The Quaker visitors were chiefly Liberals, i.e. supporters of a 'humanized' capitalism, such as has never existed and never will. Hence they recorded with wonder, but often without much comprehension, what they saw, and in the course of it put down much that is true and valuable, and a little that is false and harmful.

To take the least attractive side first. It is quite false that before the war there was 'persecution of the Churches' (p. 38). It is not true that the land was collectivised with 'ruthlessness' (p. 48), or that the collective farms 'were taken over from their previous owners' (p. 50). It is not true that set speeches by Soviet trade union officials to foreign delegates are 'a generally accepted pattern,' and that question-and-answer are a 'departure from plan' (p. 58). These, and one or two occasions when the visitors adopt a somewhat irritating attitude of moral superiority, should be looked out for by the short-tempered.

On the other hand, there is a perfect armoury of valuable reporting on a wide variety of subjects. In the appendices there is a faithfully reported statement of Soviet

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foreign policy, in reply to the Quakers' questions, by Malik; and a useful summary on Soviet trade unions. In the text there are numerous statements, backed by evidence, like the following: Prisoners 'were paid the full outside rate for the work that they do' (p. 66). 'It would be stupid and wrong to picture the Soviet peasant or the town-dweller as being starved or oppressed. . . . We were impressed with the dignity of the Soviet workers' (p. 82). 'We found life in the U.S.S.R. much more "normal" than we thought it would be' (p. 87). 'The people walking about the streets looked happy and confident, and their conversation confirmed it' (p. 88). 'I wish that we had in England anything like the slum clearance and rehousing projects which we could see everywhere' (Paul Cadbury, p. 99). 'The virtues of peace are being extolled as the virtues of war were only too frequently extolled in Nazi Germany from 1933 onwards, and the contrast is not without importance and encouragement. The effect is certainly to imprint on the ordinary Russian mind the necessity for peace and a hatred of war' (p. 109).

These are only a few samples of much that makes the Quaker report useful and stimulating.

A.R.

MEDIEVAL ENGLAND

England in the late Middle Ages, by A. R. Myers. (260 pp. Penguin Books. *3s.*). Vol. 4 of the Pelican History of England.

THIS begins with the accession of Edward II in 1307 and describes the development of English society up to the time of the Reformation Parliament in the 1530's. Myers is fully aware of the importance of this study for our own times. Late medieval England experienced 'exhausting wars, economic difficulties and the gradual bewildering breakup of its code of values.' In literature and art there runs 'a strain of melancholy, a preoccupation with death, a sense of coming disaster.' In philosophy 'veneration was still paid to the traditional intellectual authorities and methods; but in reality the growing subtlety of logical analysis was destroying belief in the validity of human reasoning.' These are the obvious parallels between the collapse of feudalism and the collapse of capitalism.

Myers gives a good analysis of the many aspects of the crisis of English feudal society. Despite formal chapter divisions he manages to integrate the political, religious, economic and social problems and constantly emphasises the importance of the fundamental economic crisis. This is popular presentation

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ESTABLISHED 1936
Volume XVII, Number 1
Winter, 1953

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coupled with good scholarship. The book is weakest in its analysis of the economic crisis itself, which affected the whole of European feudal society from the 14th century onwards. Myers clearly delineates the outward features of the crisis and the results which flowed from it but fails to demonstrate its roots within the productive relations of feudalism. Generally the earlier chapters are more useful and original than the later chapters. The chapter on the Tudor despotism especially should be treated with care; the alliance between Crown and middle classes is stressed, but the class antagonisms which were a precondition of bourgeois acquiescence are played down if not wholly ignored. Significantly, Dobb's invaluable chapters in his *Studies in the Development of Capitalism* are omitted from the reading list.

L. F. MARKS.

THE CENTURY OF THE ENGLISH REVOLUTION

England in the Seventeenth Century (1603-1714), by Maurice Ashley. (256 pp. Penguin Books. *2s. 6d.*).

THE publication of a brief but scholarly history of England at half a crown a volume is an important event at a time when our national heritage needs to be widely understood and defended; and the century of the English Revolution is at once the most crucial and the most often misunderstood. Mr. Ashley's book is readable and interesting. It embodies the fruits of recent research and considers economic development, class structure, art and thought as well as political events. Nevertheless the attempted synthesis turns out to be little more than an eclectic and inconsistent summary of recent scholarship.

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The first chapters offer hope of a consistent interpretation. The author declares the Interregnum to have been no backwater, but 'a turn in the river'; rejects the view that the real causes of the Civil War were religious; and after outlining the economic and social changes of the 16th and early 17th Centuries, traces the political crisis to the rise of a new, revolutionary, class. Of this class he says: 'both their ultimate aims and their immediate programme were . . . revolutionary'; and he adds that the Long Parliament met in 1640 'determined not on reform but revolution.' That, however, is the last one hears of a revolution. What followed is described as an 'Interregnum', a 'Puritan Rebellion'—in fact, the old concepts which Mr. Ashley had previously rejected. Economic and social development is not seriously pursued beyond 1640, and, while stress is laid on the advance of science and of bourgeois ideology generally in the later 17th Century, its class basis remains unexplained.

Mr. Ashley, in short, unlike the English bourgeoisie of his period, prepares a revolution but takes fright before the event, and—stopping only to apologise for Cromwell and to belittle the Levellers—retreats hastily to the conventional standpoint from which the 'Martyred King' and the 'Glorious Revolution' appear without the inverted commas which surround the 'Eleven Years' Tyranny'. The book may be said to begin with 'Tawneyism' and to end with Toryism. It will provoke and stimulate but at the same time baffle and disappoint the readers.

A.L.M.

FILM ECONOMICS

Eady Scheme, by Anthony S. Gruner. (32 pp. Daily Film Renter. 6*d*.)

THE Eady Scheme is a device whereby certain proportions of the Cinema Entertainment Tax paid by the public is channelled back to British film production. There is little doubt that but for this subsidy British films would have disappeared from the screens by now. The continuation of Eady is now the subject of intense and unprincipled bargaining between the cinema proprietors, the renters, the British producers and Hollywood (whose so-called 'British' films share in the subsidy!). In these discussions, the thing that really matters—the livelihood of several thousand British technicians and craftsmen—is rarely considered.

This pamphlet, published by one of the film Trade papers, is a useful, exhaustive and on the whole accurate survey of the background and history of Eady since its inception. It is not to be expected that such a source would recognise the necessity for a complete reconstruction of the industry, leading as rapidly as possible to public ownership, as the only means of breaking the Hollywood stranglehold and ensuring an expanding, prosperous and socially useful British film industry. But for the student of the absurdly complex economics of the film world, the documentation here set forth will be of value.

R.B.

PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED

BOOKS

White Book on the Bonn War Treaty. Information Office of the German Democratic Republic. 228 pp. 1s.
The American Socialist Movement. Ira Kipnis. Columbia University Press; London: Geoffrey Cumberledge. 496 pp. 40s.
Not Like This. Jane Walsh. Lawrence & Wishart. 144 pp. 7s. 6d.
Rumanian Summer. Jack Lindsay & Maurice Cornforth. Lawrence & Wishart. 152 pp. 5s.
Public Speaking and Chairmanship. Frederick W. Mills. Jordan. 152 pp. 7s. 6d.

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GLANCING AT THE FILES

ON March 6, I opened a drawer marked '*Labour Monthly* Contributors Index' and took out a card which read: 'Stalin, J. V.' It bore 14 entries. Starting in July, 1928, Numbers 1 to 5 were first translations of speeches and articles, each published within four or five weeks of their appearance. Then came 'Marxism and the National and Colonial Question', a work of such profound importance to the British Labour movement and the associated colonial peoples. This, too, was first made available in Britain to *Labour Monthly* readers, in a special translation. So the record goes on until the last entry in August, 1952. To these we now add from the current number Stalin's analysis of the General Strike (Page 169). Then I turned to read once more a little gem which we printed under the title *Stalin's Apprenticeship*, with other writings, in the 70th Birthday Anniversary issue. It was a speech to the Railway Workshopmen in Tiflis, describing how, among them, he received his 'first, militant revolutionary christening. Here, in the circle of these comrades, I became an apprentice of the revolution. As you see, my first teachers were the Tiflis workers.' And in one short page he goes on to give the lesson of which his whole life was an example; the need to learn from the people. No wonder throughout the world millions feel like the old plasterer's labourer, who came up to me in the street to say: 'I feel closer to him than to any of the ruling mob in this country. Which of *them* has the British worker to grieve for?'

This month I have room to quote only from one of the many letters from readers paying tribute to 'the greatest champion for peace'. From the North-East coast: 'Although our most beloved comrade has died, he will live for ever.'

The February fund total was

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Our thanks to you all.

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Published by the Proprietors, The Trinity Trust, 134, Ballards Lane, London, N.3, and printed by Wembley News, Wembley, Middlesex, Great Britain. Registered for transmission by Magazine Post to Canada, including Newfoundland.

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